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EXAMINER

SHELTON, BRIAN K

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2611

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. 09/749,407 | Applicant(s) LIPSCOMB ET AL. | |
| | Examiner Brian Shelton | Art Unit 2611 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
 - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 December 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-44 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-44 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>4/16/01; 12/28/00</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Action is in response to the Application filed 28 December 2000.
2. The Application has been examined. **Original claims 1-44** are pending. The objections and rejections cited are as stated below:

Specification

3. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it exceeds the maximum length of 150 words. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Claim Objections

4. Claims 6, 39 and 40 are objected to because of the following informalities:

In **claim 6** at line 2, "providesalternative" should be changed to --provides alternative--.

In **claim 20** at line 3, "classification information" should be changed to --hyperlinking information-- to be consistent with parent claim 14, which does not disclose the element of "classification information."

In **claim 39** at line 3, "TV channels number" should be changed to --TV channel numbers--.

In **claim 43** at line 3, "TV channels number" should be changed to --TV channel numbers--.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

5. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

6. **Claims 14 and 22** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding **claims 14 and 22**, the phrase "etc." in line 4 renders the claims indefinite because the claims include elements not actually disclosed (those encompassed by "etcetera"), thereby rendering the scope of the claim(s) unascertainable. See MPEP § 2173.05(d).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

8. **Claims 39-44** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Finseth et al. (Finseth), U.S. Patent No. 6,665,870.

Regarding **claims 39 and 40**, Finseth discloses a broadcast server (Fig. 2, Program Guide Transmitting System **46**) in a TV system and corresponding method, comprising:

- a) a correspondence table storing means (Fig. 2, Database **48**) for a dynamic table of correspondence between TV program categories and TV channel numbers (col. 6, line 57 – col. 7, line 10, where program guide database contains TV channel information (col. 8, lines 39-57) and program category information (col. 9, lines 7-20));
- b) creation means (Fig. 2; Data Entry Station **50**) for hyperlinking information which contains a list of channels broadcasting the same nature of program by referencing the correspondence table (col. 7, lines 11-22 [manual entry of additional information]; col. 9, line 56 – col.10, line 9 [additional information including HTML hyperlinks]; col. 14, lines 10-59 [ordering narrative text according to program category]); and
- c) transmitting means (Fig. 2; Combiner **42** and Uplink Dish **30**) for the hyperlinking information to TV devices whereby upon successfully processing the broadcast hyperlinking information for display on a TV screen a viewer surfs among the channels specified in the hyperlinking information (col. 7, lines 34-43, describing transmission; col. 9, line 56 – col. 10, line 9; col. 16, lines 39-48 [channel selection by activating hyperlinks in narrative text]).

Regarding **claims 41 and 42**, Finseth discloses a receiver (Fig. 3, Receiver **64**) for surfing hyperlinked information in a TV system and corresponding method, comprising:

- a) storing apparatus (Fig. 3, Memory **78**) which receives program content including hyperlinks and related channels (col. 11, lines 41-42; col. 12, lines 13-18 [HTML objects received at Receiver **64**]; Fig. 6, col. 15, lines 15-25 [narrative text EPG, including hyperlinks to programming]; col. 16, lines 39-48 [Channel selection by activating hyperlinks]);
- b) classification information in the storing apparatus which relates program content related to related channels (col. 14, lines 10-59); and
- c) control apparatus (Fig. 3, CPU **74**) which enables a viewer to access the classification information and surf among related channels (col. 15, lines 15-23; col. 16, lines 22-47).

Regarding **claim 43**, Finseth discloses a broadcast server (Fig. 2, Program Guide Transmitting Means **46**) in a TV system, comprising:

- a) correspondence information (Fig. 2, Database **48**) between TV program categories and TV channel numbers (col. 6, line 57 – col. 7, line 10, where program guide database contains TV channel information (col. 8, lines 39-57) and program category information (col. 9, lines 7-20));
- b) creation apparatus (Fig. 2; Data Entry Station **50**) which creates hyperlinking information of channels broadcasting the same nature of

- program categories by referencing the correspondence information (col. 7, lines 11-22 [manual entry of additional information]; col. 9, line 56 – col. 10, line 9 [additional information including HTML hyperlinks]; col. 14, lines 10-59 [ordering narrative text according to program category]); and
- c) transmitting apparatus (Fig. 2; Combiner 42 and Uplink Dish 30) which transmits the hyperlinking information to TV devices whereby upon successfully processing the broadcast hyperlinking information for display on a TV screen, a viewer surfs among the channels specified in the hyperlinking information (col. 7, lines 34-43, describing transmission; col. 9, line 56 – col. 10, line 9; col. 16, lines 39-48 [channel selection by activating hyperlinks in narrative text]).

Regarding **claim 44**, Finseth discloses a receiver (Fig. 3, Receiver 64) for surfing hyperlinked information in a TV system, comprising:

- a) storing apparatus (Fig. 3, Memory 78), which receives program content including hyperlinks and related channels (col. 11, lines 41-42; col. 12, lines 13-18 [HTML objects received at Receiver 64]; Fig. 6, col. 15, lines 15-25 [narrative text EPG, including hyperlinks to programming]; col. 16, lines 39-48 [Channel selection by activating hyperlinks]);
- b) classification information of program content related to the same channels (col. 14, lines 10-59); and

- c) control apparatus (Fig. 3, CPU 74), which enables a viewer to access the classification information and surf among related channels (col. 15, lines 15-23; col. 16, lines 22-47).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

9. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

10. **Claims 14, 16-17, 19-22, and 24-25** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Finseth et al. (Finseth), U.S. Patent No. 6,665,870 in view of Shoff et al. (Shoff), U.S. Patent No. 6,240,555.

Regarding **claims 14 and 22**, Finseth discloses a method for interactive TV contextual surfing using inter-channel hyperlink and corresponding program medium, comprising:

- a) creating program content including a description of program type for classification purposes (col. 4, line 56 – col. 5, line 8);
- b) transmitting the program content in a streaming data format to a broadcast station (Fig. 2, Transmission Station 26) and a broadcast server (Fig. 2, Program Guide Transmitting System 46; col. 5, lines 9-14; col. 6, lines 48-67);

- c) generating a correspondence table (Fig. 2, Database 48) between TV program categories and TV channel numbers in the broadcast server (col. 6, line 57 – col. 7, line 10, where program guide database contains TV channel information (col. 8, lines 39-57) and program category information (col. 9, lines 7-20));
- d) creating a hyperlink information of channels that are broadcasting the same nature of programs by referencing the correspondence table (col. 7, lines 11-22 [manual entry of additional information]; col. 9, line 56 – col. 10, line 9 [additional information including HTML hyperlinks]; col. 14, lines 10-59 [ordering narrative text according to program category]);
- e) broadcasting the hyperlink information to the list of channels in the correspondence table (col. 7, lines 34-43);
- f) transmitting the broadcast program information to a TV device including a set-top box via a first channel (col. 7, line 52 – col. 8, line 20 [transmission of objects]; col. 9, lines 7-20 [general program object]);
- g) transmitting the hyperlinking information to the set-top box (col. 7, lines 52 – col. 8, line 20 [transmission of objects]; col. 9, line 56 – col. 10, line 13 [HTML objects]); and
- h) processing the broadcast hyperlinking information by the set-top box for display on a TV screen (Figs. 4-6; col. 13, lines 31-67).

Although Finseth discloses transmitting hyperlink information to the set-top box, Finseth fails to disclose transmitting the hyperlinking information via a second channel, as claimed.

However, Shoff, in an analogous art, teaches transmitting supplemental content, including hyperlinking information, to a set-top box via a separate channel (Fig. 4, col. 7, lines 51-60, describing delivery of supplemental content; see col. 5, lines 18-22, describing supplemental content including "hyperlinks to similar programs of a similar type..."). Utilizing separate (i.e., first and second) channels for the delivery of different types of content (e.g., EPG data and supplemental content data) provides the typical and well-known benefit of increased bandwidth for content transmitted to a receiver.

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the data transmission of Finseth to incorporate transmitting the hyperlinking information to the set-top box via a second channel, as taught by Shoff, for the benefit of increased bandwidth for transmitting content to a receiver in an interactive TV system.

The limitation of **claims 16 and 24** is encompassed by the teachings of Finseth in view of Shoff, as discussed above. Specifically, Finseth discloses creating a hyperlink list of channels that are broadcasting the same nature of programs by referencing the correspondence table (col. 7, lines 11-22 [manual entry of additional information]; col. 9, line 56 – col.10, line 9 [additional

information including HTML hyperlinks]; col. 14, lines 10-59 [ordering narrative text according to program category]).

The limitation of **claims 17 and 25** is encompassed by the teachings of Finseth in view of Shoff, as discussed above. Specifically, Finseth discloses storing a dynamic table of correspondence between the TV program categories and TV channel numbers (col. 6, line 57 – col. 7, line 10, where program guide database contains TV channel information (col. 8, lines 39-57) and program category information (col. 9, lines 7-20)).

The limitation of **claim 19** is encompassed by the teachings of Finseth in view of Shoff, as discussed above. Specifically, Finseth discloses the set-top apparatus stores TV broadcast by categories in a first classification table (Fig. 4, col. 14, lines 23-40).

The limitation of **claim 20** is encompassed by the teachings of Finseth in view of Shoff, as discussed above. Specifically, Finseth discloses transmitting the TV program information and hyperlinking information directly to the set-top boxes (Fig. 1, col. 5, lines 31-37). Shoff teaches transmitting the hyperlinking information in a separate channel (col. 7, lines 51-60).

As for **claim 21**, Finseth discloses generating and transmitting interactive program information and classification information in a data-streaming format (col. 7, line 51 – col. 8, line 4).

11. **Claims 1-4, 6, 27-30, 32, 33-36, and 38** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Finseth et al. (Finseth), U.S. Patent No. 6,665,870 in view of Lasky, U.S. Patent No. 6,367,078.

As for **claim 1**, Finseth discloses an interactive TV content surfing system comprising:

- a) creating apparatus (Fig. 2; Program Guide Data Transmitting System **46**), which creates program content for hyperlinking to other program content (col. 7, lines 11-22 [manual entry of additional information]; col. 9, line 56 – col. 10, line 9 [additional information including HTML hyperlinks]; col. 14, lines 10-59 [ordering narrative text according to program category]);
- b) broadcast apparatus (Fig. 2; Combiner **42** and Uplink dish **30**) which broadcasts interactive TV program content with hyperlinks to other content (col. 7, lines 34-43; col. 7, lines 52 – col. 8, line 20 [transmission of objects]; col. 9, line 56 – col. 10, line 13 [HTML objects]);
- c) receiver apparatus (Fig. 3, Receiver **64**) which receives and processes the interactive TV program content with hyperlinks for display to a viewer (Figs. 4-6; col. 13, lines 31-67); and

- d) enabling apparatus (Fig. 3, CPU 74; col. 11, lines 50-55), which enables a viewer to hyperlink to a related program (col. 15, lines 15-23; col. 16, lines 39-48).

Although Finseth discloses enabling a viewer to hyperlink to a related program, Finseth fails to specifically disclose hyperlinking from a program being viewed to a related program, as claimed.

However, Lasky, in an analogous art, teaches surfing (i.e., hyperlinking) from a program being viewed to a related program (Fig. 6b; col. 6, lines 31-49; col. 9, lines 1-27) for the benefit of providing a more intuitive electronic program guide system (see col. 4, line 4-8).

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the enabling apparatus of Finseth to incorporate hyperlinking from a program being viewed to a related program, as taught by Lasky, for the benefit of providing a more intuitive electronic program guide system in an interactive TV system.

The limitation of **claim 2** is encompassed by the teachings of Finseth in view of Lasky, as discussed above relative to claim 1. Specifically, Lasky teaches the enabling apparatus enables the viewer to hyperlink from a scheduled program to a related program (Fig. 6b; col. 6, lines 31-49; col. 9, lines 1-27, where a program currently being viewed is inherently a "scheduled" program).

The limitation of **claim 3** is encompassed by the teachings of Finseth in view of Lasky, as discussed above relative to claim 1. Specifically, Finseth discloses the enabling apparatus enables the viewer to hyperlink to a recording dialog when a related program may be broadcast in the future (Fig. 8; col. 17, lines 25-31).

The limitation of **claim 4** is encompassed by the teachings of Finseth in view of Lasky, as discussed above relative to claim 1. Specifically, Finseth discloses:

- g) the broadcast apparatus which transmits audio/video program content and program classification together to the receiver (col. 7, lines 34-43), and
- h) control apparatus (EPG of Fig. 6), which enables the viewer to interact with the program content and the program classification (col. 15, lines 15-25; col. 16, lines 22-48).

The limitation of **claim 6** is encompassed by the teachings of Finseth in view of Lasky, as discussed above relative to claim 1. Specifically, Finseth discloses:

- j) receiver apparatus which provides alternative hyperlinking of program content (col. 6, lines 21-39, where hyperlinking is to additional information, such as plot information or list of actors, or any program information).

Regarding **claims 33 and 27**, Finseth discloses a method for contextual surfing in an interactive TV computer system and corresponding program medium, comprising:

- a) creating program content for hyperlinking to other program content (col. 7, lines 11-22 [manual entry of additional information]; col. 9, line 56 – col.10, line 9 [additional information including HTML hyperlinks]; col. 14, lines 10-59 [ordering narrative text according to program category]);
- b) broadcasting interactive TV program content with hyperlinks to other content (col. 7, lines 34-43; col. 7, lines 52 – col. 8, line 20 [transmission of objects]; col. 9, line 56 – col. 10, line 13 [HTML objects]);
- c) receiving and processing the interactive TV program content with hyperlinks for display to a viewer (Fig. 3, Receiver 64; Figs. 4-6, col. 13, lines 31-67); and
- d) enabling a viewer to hyperlink to a related program (col. 15, lines 15-23; col. 16, lines 39-48).

Although Finseth discloses hyperlinking to select programs in a related category, Finseth fails to specifically disclose disclose hyperlinking from a program being viewed to a related program, as claimed.

However, Lasky, in an analogous art, teaches surfing (i.e., hyperlinking) from a program being viewed to a related program (Fig. 6b; col. 6, lines 31-49; col. 9, lines 1-27) for the benefit of providing a more intuitive electronic program guide system (see col. 4, line 4-8).

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the program selection of Finseth to incorporate hyperlinking from a program being viewed to a related program, as taught by Lasky, for the benefit of providing a more intuitive electronic program guide system in an interactive TV system.

The limitation of **claims 34 and 28** is encompassed by the teachings of Finseth in view of Lasky, as discussed above relative to claims 33 and 27. Specifically, Lasky teaches enabling a viewer to hyperlink from a scheduled program to a related program program (Fig. **6b**; col. 6, lines 31-49; col. 9, lines 1-27, where a program currently being viewed is inherently a “scheduled” program).

The limitation of **claims 35 and 29** is encompassed by the teachings of Finseth in view of Lasky, as discussed above relative to claims 33 and 27. Specifically, Finseth discloses enabling a viewer to hyperlink to a recording dialog when a related program may be broadcast in the future (Fig. **8**; col. 17, lines 25-31).

The limitation of **claims 36 and 30** is encompassed by the teachings of Finseth in view of Lasky, as discussed above relative to claims 33 and 27. Specifically, Finseth discloses broadcasting audio/video program content and

program classification together to the receiver (col. 7, lines 34-43; col. 7, lines 52 – col. 8, line 20 [transmission of objects to Receiver **64** (Fig. **3**)]; col. 9, line 56 – col. 10, line 13 [HTML objects]) and interacting with the program content and program classification (col. 15, lines 15-23; col. 16, lines 39-48 [hyperlinking to programming of related content]).

The limitation of **claims 38 and 32** is encompassed by the teachings of Finseth in view of Lasky, as discussed above relative to claims 33 and 27. Specifically, Finseth discloses providing alternative hyperlinking of program content (col. 6, lines 21-39, where hyperlinking is to additional information, such as plot information or list of actors, or any program information).

12. **Claims 7-11** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Finseth et al. (Finseth), U.S. Patent No. 6,665,870 in view of Shoff et al. (Shoff), U.S. Patent No. 6,240,555, further in view of Lasky, U.S. Patent No. 6,367,078.

As for **claim 7**, Finseth discloses an interactive TV contextual content surfing system using inter-channel hyperlinking (Fig. **1**), comprising:

- a) a content creation station (Fig. **1**, data from Schedule Feeds **24** inherently discloses a 'content creation station' for generating the content) generating and transmitting interactive program information and

- classification information in a data streaming format (col. 4, line 56 – col. 5, line 8; col. 5, lines 9-14; col. 6, lines 48-67);
- b) a TV broadcast station (Fig. 2, Transmission station **26**) for receiving the streaming data (col. 5, lines 2-8);
 - c) a broadcast server (Fig. 2; Program Guide Data Transmitting System **46**) for processing classification categories in the streaming data and hyperlinking program information in related categories (col. 7, lines 11-22 [manual entry of additional information]; col. 9, line 56 – col.10, line 9 [additional information including HTML hyperlinks]; col. 14, lines 10-59 [ordering narrative text according to program category]);
 - d) a network (Fig. 1; Satellite **32**) coupled to the TV broadcast station for transmitting the TV program information and classification directly to set-top boxes (col. 5, lines 25-37); and
 - e) viewer means including an interface enabling a viewer to view a program in a category (Fig. 6; col. 15, lines 15-25; col. 16, lines 39-48).

Although Finseth discloses transmitting the TV program information and hyperlink information directly to the set-top box, Finseth fails to disclose transmitting the hyperlinking information via a separate channel, as claimed.

However, Shoff, in an analogous art, teaches transmitting supplemental content, including hyperlinking information, to a set-top box via a separate channel (Fig. 4, col. 7, lines 51-60, describing delivery of supplemental content; see col. 5, lines 18-22, describing supplemental content including “hyperlinks to

similar programs of a similar type..."). Utilizing separate (i.e., first and second) channels for the delivery of different types of content (e.g., EPG data and supplemental content data) provides the typical and well-known benefit of increased bandwidth for content transmitted to a receiver.

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the data transmission of Finseth to incorporate transmitting the hyperlinking information to the set-top box via a second channel, as taught by Shoff, for the benefit of increased bandwidth for transmitting content to a receiver in an interactive TV system.

Although Finseth discloses hyperlinking to select programs in a related category, the combination of Finseth in view of Shoff fails to specifically disclose hyperlinking from a program being viewed to a related program, as claimed.

However, Lasky, in an analogous art, teaches surfing (i.e., hyperlinking) from a program being viewed to a related program (Fig. 6b; col. 6, lines 31-49; col. 9, lines 1-27) for the benefit of providing a more intuitive electronic program guide system (see col. 4, line 4-8).

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the viewer means of Finseth in view of Shoff to incorporate hyperlinking from a program being viewed to a related program, as taught by Lasky, for the benefit of providing a more intuitive electronic program guide system in an interactive TV system.

The limitation of **claim 8** is encompassed by the teachings of Finseth in view of Shoff, further in view of Lasky, as discussed above relative to claim 7. Specifically, Finseth discloses storing apparatus (Fig. 2; Database 48) included in the broadcast server and stores a dynamic table of correspondence between TV program categories and channel numbers (col. 6, line 57 – col. 7, line 10, where program guide database contains TV channel information (col. 8, lines 39-57) and program category information (col. 9, lines 7-20)).

The limitation of **claim 9** is encompassed by the teachings of Finseth in view of Shoff, further in view of Lasky, as discussed above relative to claim 7. Specifically, Finseth discloses server apparatus which creates a hyperlink list of channels that are broadcasting the same nature of programs by referencing the correspondence table (col. 7, lines 11-22 [manual entry of additional information]; col. 9, line 56 – col.10, line 9 [additional information including HTML hyperlinks]; col. 14, lines 10-59 [ordering narrative text according to program category]).

The limitation of **claim 10** is encompassed by the teachings of Finseth in view of Shoff, further in view of Lasky, as discussed above relative to claim 7. Specifically, Finseth discloses server apparatus which transmits hyperlink information to the set-top box (col. 7, lines 11-22; col. 9, line 56 – col.10, line 9). Shoff teaches transmitting hyperlink information on a separate channel col. 7, lines 51-60, describing delivery of supplemental content; see col. 5, lines 18-22,

describing supplemental content including "hyperlinks to similar programs of a similar type...").

The limitation of **claim 11** is encompassed by the teachings of Finseth in view of Shoff, further in view of Lasky, as discussed above relative to claim 7. Specifically, Finseth discloses the set-top apparatus stores TV broadcast by categories in a first classification table (Fig. 4, col. 14, lines 23-40).

13. **Claims 15 and 23** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Finseth et al. (Finseth), U.S. Patent No. 6,665,870 in view of Shoff et al. (Shoff), U.S. Patent No. 6,240,555, as applied to claims 14 and 22, further in view of Lasky, U.S. Patent No. 6,367,078.

As for **claims 15 and 23**, the teachings of Finseth in view of Shoff are relied upon as discussed above relative to claim 14 and 22. Although Finseth discloses selecting a program to view in a program category, the combination of Finseth in view of Shoff fails to disclose hyperlinking to another program in the category, as claimed.

However, Lasky, in an analogous art, teaches surfing (i.e., hyperlinking) from a program being viewed to a related program (Fig. 6b; col. 6, lines 31-49; col. 9, lines 1-27) for the benefit of providing a more intuitive electronic program guide system (see col. 4, line 4-8).

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the program selection of Finseth in view of Shoff to incorporate hyperlinking from a program being viewed to a related program, as taught by Lasky, for the benefit of providing a more intuitive electronic program guide system in an interactive TV system.

14. **Claims 5, 31 and 37** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Finseth et al. (Finseth), U.S. Patent No. 6,665,870 in view of Lasky, U.S. Patent No. 6,367,078, as applied to claims 1, 27 and 33, further in view of Barret et al. (Barret), U.S. Patent No. 6,005,597.

As for **claim 5**, the teachings of Finseth in view of Lasky are relied upon as discussed above relative to claim 1. Finseth in view of Lasky fails to disclose the control apparatus at the receiver grouping program content by deduction based on viewer TV habits, as claimed.

However, Barret, in an analogous art, teaches a receiver control apparatus that groups program content by deduction based on viewer TV habits (Figs. **2, 9 and 10**, Fig. **12**, Controller **1240**; col. 3, line 56 – col. 4, line 26; col. 11, lines 30-43) for the benefit of allowing a viewer to quickly find a program of greatest interest without having to tediously search through large numbers of available programs (see col. 2, lines 22-25).

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Finseth in view of Lasky to incorporate a control apparatus at a receiver that groups program content by deduction based on viewer TV habits, as taught by Barret, for the benefit of allowing a viewer to quickly find a program of greatest interest without having to tediously search through large numbers of available programs in an interactive TV system.

As for **claims 31 and 37**, the teachings of Finseth in view of Lasky are relied upon as discussed above relative to claims 27 and 33. The combination of Finseth in view of Lasky fails to disclose grouping program content at the receiver by deduction based on viewer TV habits, as claimed.

However, Barret, in an analogous art, teaches a receiver control apparatus that groups program content by deduction based on viewer TV habits (Figs. **2, 9 and 10**, Fig. **12**, Controller **1240**; col. 3, line 56 – col. 4, line 26; col. 11, lines 30-43) for the benefit of allowing a viewer to quickly find a program of greatest interest without having to tediously search through large numbers of available programs (see col. 2, lines 22-25).

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the method of Finseth in view of Lasky to incorporate a control apparatus at a receiver that groups program content by deduction based on viewer TV habits, as taught by Barret, for the

benefit of allowing a viewer to quickly find a program of greatest interest without having to tediously search through large numbers of available programs in an interactive TV system.

15. **Claim 13** is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Finseth et al. (Finseth), U.S. Patent No. 6,665,870 in view of Shoff et al. (Shoff), U.S. Patent No. 6,240,555, further in view of Lasky, U.S. Patent No. 6,367,078, as applied to claim 7, further in view of Tsukidate, U.S. Patent No. 6,714,722.

As for **claim 13**, the teachings of Finseth in view of Shoff, further in view of Lasky are relied upon as discussed above relative to claim 7. Finseth in view of Shoff, further in view of Lasky fails to disclose the local storing apparatus in the set-top box which stores recorded programs and classifies categories of programs in a third classification table, as claimed.

However, Tsukidate, in an analogous art teaches a set top box (Fig. 2, Digital Multimedia Recorder 5) including a local storing apparatus which stores recorded programs and classifies categories of programs in a recorded programs classification table (Fig. 8, Recorded Program Information Table 47 including category code 137; col. 4, lines 8-51; col. 7, lines 21-31; see col. 5, lines 19-34 describing program information data recorded, including category code 137) for the benefit of improved management of recorded programming (see col. 2, lines 7-12).

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the set-top box of Finseth in view of Sohff, further in view of Lasky to incorporate a local storing apparatus which records stored programs and classifies categories of program in a third classification table, as taught by Tsukidate, for the benefit of improved management of recorded programming in an interactive TV system.

16. **Claims 18 and 26** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Finseth et al. (Finseth), U.S. Patent No. 6,665,870 in view of in view of Shoff et al. (Shoff), U.S. Patent No. 6,240,555, as applied to claims 14 and 22, further in view of Tsukidate, U.S. Patent No. 6,714,722.

As for **claims 18 and 26**, the teachings of Finseth in view of Shoff are relied upon as discussed above relative to claims 14 and 22. Finseth in view of Shoff fails to disclose the local storing apparatus which stores recorded programs and classifies categories of programs in a third classification table, as claimed.

However, Tsukidate, in an analogous art teaches a set top box (Fig. 2, Digital Multimedia Recorder 5) including a local storing apparatus which stores recorded programs and classifies categories of programs in a recorded programs classification table (Fig. 8, Recorded Program Information Table 47 including category code 137; col. 4, lines 8-51; col. 7, lines 21-31; see col. 5, lines 19-34 describing program information data recorded, including category code 137) for

the benefit of improved management of recorded programming (see col. 2, lines 7-12).

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the method of Finseth in view of Shoff to incorporate a local storing apparatus which records stored programs and classifies categories of program in a third classification table, as taught by Tsukidate, for the benefit of improved management of recorded programming in an interactive TV system.

17. **Claim 12** is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over (Finseth) et al. (Finseth), U.S. Patent No. 6,665,870 in view of in view of Shoff et al. (Shoff), U.S. Patent No. 6,240,555, further in view of Lasky, U.S. Patent No. 6,367,078, as applied to claim 7, further in view of Schein et al. (Schein), U.S. Patent No. 6,732,369.

As for **claim 12**, the teachings of Finseth in view of Shoff, further in view of Lasky are relied upon as discussed above relative to claim 7. The combination of Finseth in view of Shoff, further in view of Lasky fails to disclose the set-top box apparatus storing categories of program in a TV program guide in a second classification table, as claimed.

However, Schein, in an analogous art, teaches an electronic program guide in a set-top wherein program categories are stored in a separate

classification table (Fig. 8, col. 11, lines 40-51) for the benefit of enhancing the user's ability to locate a program with a particular theme.

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the set-top box of Finseth in view of Shoff, further in view of Lasky to incorporate storing categories programs in a TV program guide in a second classification table, as taught by Schein, for the benefit of enhancing the user's ability to locate a program with a particular theme.

Information Disclosure Statement

18. The information disclosure statement filed 28 December 2000 fails to comply with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97, 1.98 and MPEP § 609 because the web site addresses referred to in the "Other Documents" section, namely www.obvious.com and www.veon.com, are unclear as to what content is intended to be considered by the examiner. Further, the addresses fail to comply with MPEP § 609 requirement of a date for the reference, and moreover, www.veon.com provides a link to a Phillips web page while the www.obvious.com is inactive. Accordingly, the web site information has not been considered on the merits. Applicant is advised that the date of any re-submission of any item of information contained in this information disclosure statement or the submission of any missing element(s) will be the date of submission for purposes of determining compliance with the requirements based on the time of filing the statement, including all certification requirements for statements under 37 CFR 1.97(e). See MPEP § 609 ¶ C(1).

Conclusion

19. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Yuen et al. (Yuen), U.S. Patent No. 5,673,089, discloses selecting channel on a television system by theme, wherein a user activation of a theme key on a remote controller results in selection of channels corresponding to a desired category (abstract; Figs. 3-6; col. 5, line 37 – col. 8, line 46).

Amano et al. (Amano), U.S. Patent No. 5,585,865 discloses selecting channels by genre and displaying an notification when additional programming corresponding to the same genre of the program currently being viewed is available (abstract; Figs. 2-6; col. 5, line 51 – col. 8, line 40).

20. The following are suggested formats for either a Certificate of Mailing or Certificate of Transmission under 37 CFR 1.8(a). The certification may be included with all correspondence concerning this application or proceeding to establish a date of mailing or transmission under 37 CFR 1.8(a). Proper use of this procedure will result in such communication being considered as timely if the established date is within the required period for reply. The Certificate should be signed by the individual actually depositing or transmitting the correspondence or by an individual who, upon information and belief, expects the correspondence to be mailed or transmitted in the normal course of business by another no later than the date indicated.

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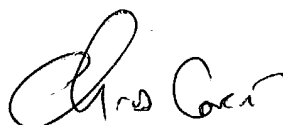
21. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brian Shelton whose telephone number is (703) 305-8714. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 7:30-4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Christopher Grant can be reached on (703) 305-4755. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Brian Shelton
Examiner
Art Unit 2611

BS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Grant", with a stylized flourish at the end.

CHRIS GRANT
PRIMARY EXAMINER